

Message Text

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ACTION SIG-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 W
-----080137 111627Z /41

P 111535Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6563

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 YAOUNDE 4368

FOR INSPECTOR GENERAL

FI CHANNEL

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASIG, CM
SUBJ: POST MEMORANDUM FOR AMERICAN EMBASSY YAOUNDE

1. PRELIMINARY: CAMEROON IS INCREASINGLY RECOGNIZED IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AS SIGNIFICANT BEYOND THE RELATIVE SIZE OF HER POPULATION OR RESOURCE ENDOWMENT. AS AFRICA'S ONLY COUNTRY OFFICIALLY BILINGUAL IN FRENCH AND ENGLISH, SHE HAS IDENTIFICATION WITH BOTH FRANCOPHONE AND ANGLOPHONE STATES. HERE NONALIGNED CREDENTIALS MAKE HER ACCEPTABLE TO THE BROAD RANGE OF POLITICAL VIEWS, INCLUDING RADICAL ONES; YET HER STABLE GOVERNMENT IS SUFFICIENTLY COORDINATED AND SHREWDLY MANAGED TO GIVE HER INCREASING ACCESS TO THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL COMMUNITY. HER RESOURCES, MODEST BUT BEGINNING TO BE EXPLOITED ACCORDING TO GOVERNMENT PLAN, GIVE CAMEROON THE LOOK OF A COUNTRY WHICH MAY WELL OFFER ANEXAMPLE OF SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT IN LESS TIME THAN WILL BE REQUIRED FOR MANY OF HER NEIGHBORS, DESPITE SERIOUS PROBLEMS WITH INFRASTRUCTURE AND UNEVEN DISTRIBUTION OF PUPULATION AND EDUCATIONAL ADVANTAGES. CAMEROON IS BASICALLY MODERATE, OFFICIALLY NONALIGNED, LEANING TOWARD A FREE ECONOMY WITH CONSIDERABLE GOVERNMENT COORDINATION, PLANNING AND ACTION.

2. STATE OF RELATIONS WITH CAMEROON.

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A. OUT BASIC STANCE IS ONE OF FREINDLY COOPERATION, EVEN MODEST CORDIALITY; OCCASIONAL DOCTRINAIRE OFFICIALS TRY TO IDENTIFY OUR POSITIONS WITH THOSE OF COLONIAL POWERS. THE VIEW OF THE US AS A POWERFUL ALLY WHICH RESPECTS AFRICAN SELF-DETERMINATION IS CAUTIOUSLY GROWING BUT IS VULNERABLE TO MISSTEPS ON OUR PART OR UNPREDICTABLE PROBLEMS IN RECONCILING OUR INTERESTS. CAMEROON, WHICH HAS BEEN CAUTIOUS ABOUT ASSUMING INTERNATIONAL

LEADERSHIP, TENDS TO ASSESS OUTCOMES BEFORE TAKING POSITIONS, GIVING CLEAR LEADERSHIP ONLY WHERE HER OWN SELF-INTEREST IS BOTH PLAIN AND/OR THREATENED. WHERE HER INTERESTS ARE NOT INVOLVED (PARTICULARLY WHERE THE G-77 POSITION IS STRONG OR THE ARABS HAVE TAKEN A STAND) THYGURC TENDS TO AVOID CONFLICT BY FOLLOWING THE GROUP. NEVERTHELESS, THERE HAS BEEN SUPPORT FOR US ON SOME ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE, SUCH AS THE 1977 PUBLIC STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT SUPPORTING THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PLAN, AND IN NAM (1976) RESERVATIONS ON PUERTO RICAN AND KOREAN RESOLUTIONS.

B. OUR STRATEGY HAS BEEN TO BUILD BRIDGES OF COOPERATION AND UNDERSTANDING, TO DISCUSS ISSUES BEFORE THEY BECOME CRISES, AND TO BASE REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT ON A SOLID FOUNDATION OF MUTUAL EXCHANGES OF VIEWS OVER A PERIOD OF TIME. AT THE SAME TIME, GIVEN GURC RELUCTANCE TO SEEK INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES, OUR SUCCESSES MUST BE LOW KEY. WE REMIND OURSELVES THAT TOO MUCH OUTWARD SUPPORT FOR THE US, ESPECIALLY ON NON-AFRICAN ISSUES, WOULD (AT LEAST AT THIS JUNCTURE) REDUCE CAMEROON'S NONALIGNED CREDENTIALS. IT IS NOT IN OUR NATIONAL INTEREST TO DRAW HER TOO FAR FROM THE CENTER WHERE SHE CAN REACH OUT TO BOTH SIDES. (ONE OF OUR ADVANTAGES IS THAT WE, TOO, WORK TO BRIDGE DIFFERENCES IN POLICY BETWEEN THE INDUSTRIAL AND THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.)

C. WE CAN TAKE SOME SATISFACTION IN THE GROUNDWORK WE HAVE BEEN BUILDING. OUR SUCCESS MUST YET BE TESTED IN UNGA--LAST YEAR THE CARTER POLICY WAS STILL ON PROBATION; THIS YEAR WILL TELL MORE. WE CAN, HOWEVER, POINT TO PROGRESS IN GENERAL EXPRESSIONS OF APPROBAL OF OUR POLICY BY RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN.
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3. POLICY ISSUES. THERE ARE THREE AREAS IN PARTICULAR WHERE POLICY ISSUES CONFRONT THE EMBASSY: AID CONGRESSIONAL MANDATE RESTRICTIONS ON INFRASTRUCTURE ASSISTANCE, OUR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY, AND EQUATORIAL GUINEA.

A. AFTER PROTRACTED BUT EVENTUALLY FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION ON THE PART OF AID WASHINGTON, OUR \$7.5 MILLION LOAN FOR THE REALIGNMENT OF THE RAILROAD WAS SIGNED IN AUGUST. AT THE CIEC MEETINGS IN PARIS IN 1977 THE UNITED STATES JOINED IN A CAMEROONIAN INITIATIVE TO SPONSOR A DECADE OF TRANSPORT. HOWEVER, THE CONGRESSIONAL MANDATE UNDER WHICH AID WASHINGTON OPERATES DISCOURAGES ASSISTANCE TO INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN FAVOR OF QUOTE HELPING THE POOREST OF THE POOR END QUOTE. UNFORTUNATELY, THE GURC HIGHEST DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES REMAIN SUCH INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS AS COMPLETING THE REALIGNMENT OF THE RAILROAD AND IMPROVING THE DEPLORABLE CONDITION OF THE ROAD SYSTEM CONNECTING THE MAJOR POPULATION AND FOOD-GROWING CENTERS. WE HAD PROPOSED A \$10 MILLION LOAN TO ASSIST IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE BAFOUSSAM-YAOUNDE ROAD, BUT HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT APPROVAL IS UNLIKELY. SOMEHOW A MECHANISM MUST BE FOUND TO ENABLE THE USG TO CONTRIBUTE DIRECTLY (NOT JUST INDIRECTLY THROUGH IFI'S) TO HIGH-PRIORITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS, NOT ONLY IN CAMEROON BUT IN OTHER

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

B. HUMAN RIGHTS IS AN AREA WHERE WE FEEL THAT CAMEROON HAS SUFFERED FROM BAD PUBLIC RELATIONS. RECENTLY A CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE LISTED CAMEROON AS A COUNTRY WITH WHICH THERE ARE HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS, LARGELY , WE HAVE BEEN TOLD, A RESULT OF AN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO SEEK INFORMATION ON A NUMBER OF SUSPECTED POLITICAL DETAINEES AND A FREEDOM HOUSE CLASSIFICATION OF CAMEROON AS QUOTE NOT FREE END QUOTE. WE BELIEVE THAT ON BALANCE THE CAMEROONIAN RECORD IN THE CONTEXT OF ITS PROBLEMS WITH DEVELOPMENT AND, IN THE PAST ON ACHIEVING UNIFICATION IN THE FACE OF AN ARMED REBELLION, WOULD NOT FARE BADLY, GIVEN SOPHISTICATED CLASSIFICATION TECHNIQUES WHICH ALLOW FOR INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY DIFFERENCES.

C. EQUATORIAL GUINEA IS A COUNTRY WHERE THERE ARE GENUINE
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HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS AND I BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD FOCUS OUR EFFORTS ON FINDING A MEANS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE AMELIORATION OF THIS SITUATION. UNFORTUNATELY, THE COUNTRIES WHICH MIGHT HAVE LEVERAGE IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA, ARE THE VERY ONES WHICH ARE

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ACTION SIG-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 W
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FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6564

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FOR INSPECTOR GENERAL

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THEMSELVES PERSISTENT VIOLATORS OF HUMAN RIGHTS (USSR, PRC AND CUBA). IT WOULD APPEAR THAT E.G. MIGHT PRESENT A LABORATORY SITUATION WHERE IN CONCERT WITH OTHER CONCERNED COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS (THE VATICAN AND WORLD COUNCIL OF

CHURCHES, FOR EXAMPLE), WE MIGHT SEEK TO DEVISE A POLICY, PERHAPS SOME SORT OF INTERNATIONAL QUARANTINE, TO LESSEN THE SUPPORT WHICH WESTERN COUNTRIES GIVE TO THE MASIE REGIME. THE RECENT DECISION TO OPPOSE AN AFDF COCOA REHABILITATION PROJECT MAY BE A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

4. ISSUES IN MISSION MANAGEMENT.

A. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION AND EFFECTIVENESS. WE WULD LIKE TO BENEFIT FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHER POSTS IN INCREASING THE SENSE OF COOPERATION AND DE-EMPHASIZING SOME ASPECTS OF COMPETITIVENESS AMONG AGENCIES. FOR EXAMPLE, AID/PEACE CORPS RELATIONS: GIVEN THE OVERLAPPING INTERESTS OF THE TWO AGENCIES, JOINT CONSULTATION ON LCIORI CMZ AND PLANNING IN PRELIMINARY STAGES OF RELEVANT PROJECTS SHOULD BE USEFUL TO BOTH; GETTING THOSE CONCERNED TO A POINT WHERE THEY AUTOMATICALLY TURN TO EACH OTHER ON A MATTER OF MUTUAL INTEREST COULD INCREASE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EACH. AT THE SAME TIME, THEIR CONSIDERABLE DIFFERENCES DISCOURAGE THIS KIND OF MESHING OF PLANS. WE COULD BENEFIT

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FROM SOLUTIONS TO SIMILAR DILEMMAS WHICH HAVE WORKED ELSEWHERE.

B. ADMINISTRATION. SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION THE JAO OPERATION HAS CONTINUED TO EXPAND, PRIMARILY IN RESPONSE TO AID'S GROWTH. THIS FAIRLY RAPID INCREASE IN AID PROGRAMS HAS NOT BEEN REFED IN PROPORTIONAL EXPANSION OF THE JAO, AND PROVIDING COMPLETE AND EFFICIENT SERVICES HAS BECOME MORE DIFFICULT WITH THE INCREASED WORKLOAD.

TWO BASIC PROBLEMS HAVE BECOME APPARENT: (1) THE DIFFICULTY OF ATTRACTING ENTHUSIASTIC, SKILLED AMERICAN ADMINISTRATIVE TALENT TO SERVE IN HARDSHIP POSTS IN AFRICA AND (2) THE NEED TO DEVELOP MORE MANAGERIAL AND TECHNICAL EXPERTISE AMONG THE CAMEROONIAN EMPLOYEES. WITH RESPECT TO THE LATTER, THERE HAS BEEN A GOOD DEAL OF STAFF TIGHTENING WITHIN THE PAST YEAR BUT WE ARE STILL CONCERNED WHETHER WE HAVE THE LOCAL STAFF TO DO THE JOB. MOST OF OUR FSLE'S WERE EMPLOYED WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT THEY WOULD LEARN ON THE JOB AND COULD BE HELPED, WITH CAREFUL AMERICAN SUPERVISION, TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE.

SIMILARLY, THE AMERICAN ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM MUST HAVE THE STRENGTH AND DEPTH NEEDED TO PROVIDE THE GOODS AND SERVICES EXPECTED OF A GROWING JAO. AID, WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR NEARLY HALF OF JAO ACTIVITY, IS CONCERNED THAT GENERAL SERVICES FUNCTIONS NEED TO BE STRENGTHENED TO KEEP UP WITH INCREASED DEMANDS. THE ISSUE OF PROJECT COMMODITY PROCUREMENT, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS BEEN UNRESOLVED FOR NEARLY A YEAR. SHOULD AID EXPAND ITS ADMIN STAFF, THE ROAD AWAY FORM A JOA MAY BE STARTED. HOWEVER, AT PRESENT, THE JAO IS SPECIFICALLY EXCLUDED FROM HANDLING AID PROJECT COMMODITIES. WE WOULD APPRECIATE THE INSPECTORS' GUIDANCE ON THESE MATTERS.

C. MORALE.

AMERICAN PERSONNEL: YAOUNDE IS A POST WHERE SELF-RELIANT

PERSONS WITH INNER STRENGTH AND RESOURCEFULNESS APPEAR TO MAKE THE BEST ADJUSTMENTS; OTHERS WITH STRONG TIES TO CULTURAL OF SOCIAL ELEMENTS NOT AVAILABLE IN CAMEROON SOMETIMES HAVE PROBLEMS. THOSE WHO ARE ADEPT AT CROSS-CULTURAL ADAPTATION OR WHO DEVELOP
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STRONG LOCAL INTERESTS (E.G. AFRICAN ART) FIND LIFE REWARDING. IN THE ABSENCE OF A STRONG PROGRAM TO PREPARE SPOUSES FOR LOCAL LIFE AND LA WUAGES, WE NEVERTHELESS FOUND SUFFICIENT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES(MAINLY WITHIN THE MISSION) TO ACCOMMODATE ALL INTERESTED DEPENDENTS AT SOME LEVEL OF SATISFACTION. THE ENTERTAINMENT FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE AMERICAN CLUB AND THE MARINE HOUSE HAVE BEEN INVALUABLE AIDS TO MORALE. WE ARE EXPLORING ADDITIONAL MORALE-BUILDING ELEMENTS AND LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR GUIDANCE IN THIS AREA OF CONCERN.

FSLES: OUR POLICY OF INCLUDING OUR CAMEROONIAN AND TCN EMPLOYEES IN OUR CONCERN FOR CAREER ADVANCEMENT, GENERAL SENSITIVITY, AND GOOD HUMAN RELATIONS HAVE RESULTED IN OUR SENDING SEVERAL LOCAL

EMPLOYEES TO THE US FOR TRAINING; THE OPPORTUNITY HAS INCREASED MORALE. SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION WE HAVE REVISED COMPLETELY THE LOCAL COMPENSATION PLAN AND MADE A NUMBER OF PROMOTIONS TO REWARD OUR MORE COMPETENT LOCAL STAFF. WE ARE EMBARKING ON A

CROSS-TRAINING PROGRAM.

5. ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL PROGRAMS. AMERICAN BANKS AND FINICIAL INSTITUTIONS HAVE SHOWN GREAT INTEREST IN CAMEROON, MAINLY BECAUSE OF THE GURC'S EXCELLENT CREDIT RATING. AMERICAN INVESTORS AND EXPORTERS HAVE BEEN MUCH LESS AGRESSIVE. SEVERAL PROMISING INVESTMENT PROJECTS HAVE BEEN CALLED OFF AT THE LAST MOMENT, AND U.S. SALES HAVE BARELY KEPT UP WITH TOTAL GROWTH IN IMPORTS. WE RISK LOSING OUR POSITION AS THE SECOND LARGEST EXPORTER TO CAMEROON. ALTHOUGH THE SMALL SIZE OF THE CAMEROONIAN MARKET, ITS TRADITIONAL TIES WITH FRANCE, AND THE PREDOMINANCE OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE ALL PRESENT OBSTACLES, THE PRINCIPAL PROBLEM FACING THE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL SECTION IS CAMEROON'S RELATIVE OBSCURITY IN THE U.S. THE EMBASSY IS LAUNCHING A CAMPAIGN TO INCREASE CAMEROON'S VISIBILITY BY ORGANIZING A CAMEROONIAN INVESTMENT MISSION TO THE U.S. AND BY SUBMITTING A NUMBER OF SECTORAL SURVEYS FOR DISTRIBUTION THROUGH USDOC'S END-USER PROGRAM. WE ALSO HOPE TO ADD A COMMERCIAL OFFICER POSITION TO
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OUR CONSULATE IN DOUALA. OTHER SUGGESTIONS AS TO HOW WE MIGHT MAXIMIZE OUR EFFECTIVENESS AND ACHIEVE CONCRETE RESULTS WOULD BE

DEEPLY APPRECIATED.

6. CONSULAR AFFAIRS. PROBLEMS ARISE FROM THE SHEER VOLUME OF RESPONSIBILITIES CENTERING IN THIS OFFICE, AS WELL AS THE DIFFICULTY OF MAINTAINING AN ORDERLY SCHEDULE WHEN SO MANY UNPREDICTABLE HIGH-PRIORITY MATTERS (REFUGEES, IMPRISONMENTS, MURDERS, ETC.) CLAIM ATTENTION. WE WOULD APPRECIATE ADVICE AS TO WAYS IN WHICH THE TOTAL PROGRAM CAN BE BETTER MANAGED, AS WELL

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ACTION SIG-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 W
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P 111525Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6565

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FOR INSPECTOR GENERAL

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AS HOW BEST TO IMPROVE THE ORGANIZATION OF SELF-HELP FUND PROCEDURES WHICH ARE ALSO ASSIGNED TO THE CONSULAR OFFICER.

7. SELF-HELP. IN ADDITION TO REGULAR CONSULAR RESPONSIBILITIES, THE VICE CONCL IS IN CHARGE OF THE AMBASSADOR'S SELF-HELP FUND. AS A RESULT SELF HELP HAS HAD TO COMPETE FOR HER ATTENTION.

8. CONSULATE IN DOUALA. COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN DOUALA AND YAOUNDE ARE USUALLY FUNCTIONING, BUT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE CONSULATE BE KEPT AWARE OF WHAT IS GOING ON, PARTICULARLY (BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY) IN THE SPHERES OF ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL AND CONSULAR MATTERS, AND THE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE AND GOODS. THE REVISION OF COURIER SCHEDULES AND NEW ORGANIZATION HAVE EASED THE PRESSURE TO SPEND INORDINATE AMOUNTS OF TIME AT THE AIRPORT; BUT THE GROWTH IN THE MOVEMENT OF GOODS AND PEOPLE CONTINUES, GOING WITH A QUICKENED PACE OF COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT. THERE HAVE BEEN CONCERTED EFFORTS TO BRING THE PRINCIPAL OFFICER AND HIS DEPUTY TO YAOUNDE FOR FREQUENT CONSULTATIONS AND FOR EMBASSY OFFICERS TO VISIT DOUALA. WE HAVE FOR SOME TIME REQUESTED ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO FACILITATE GREATER SERVICES TO AMERICAN COMPANIES

POTENTIALLY INTERESTED IN CAMEROON, INCLUDING SUPPLYING OF
INFORMATION CONCERNING BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COUNTRY.

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9. OTHER AGENCIES. THE EMBASSY'S RELATIONS WITH OTHER AGENCIES
ARE ON THE WHOLE EXCELLENT.

A. AID. WITH THE SIGNING OF THE LOAN AGREEMENT FOR TRANSCAM
III, WE NOTE APPRECIATIVE COMMENTS FROM GURC THAT THE US IS
ASSISTING WITH THEIR TOP RITY: TRANSPORTATION TO GET GOODS
TO MARKET AND TO GET SUPPLIES WITHIN REACH OF THE LESS FAVORED
PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. OUR PROGRESS, HOWEVER, MAY BE SHORTPLIEVE
IF THE PROPOSED CUTS IN AID PROGRAMS ARE AS LARGE AS HAVE BEEN
RECENTLY INDICATED. WE WOULD LIKE TO INSURE THAT WE ARE ABLE TO
CONTINUE TO SUPPORT CAMEROON'S DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES IN
ACCORDANCE WITH OUR COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT. WE
WILL WELCOME SUGGESTIONS AS TO HOW BEST TO DEAL WITH THIS SERIOUS
PROBLEM.

B. PEACE CORPS. THE GROWTH IN THE PC PROGRAM HAS CONTINUED, WITH
CONSCIOUS EMPHASIS ON THE RURAL POOR AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN.
THE CONSIDERABLE TRAVEL OF THE STAFF SHOULD ASSURE RELATIVELY
GOOD

COMMUNICATION WITH VOLUNTEERS IN THE FIELD.

NOW THAT THE PCD HAS BECOME A MEMBER OF THE SELF-HELP
COMMITTEE, WE HOPE TO INCREASE BOTH COORDINATION AND RESPONSES
FROM PCV'S, WHOSE INPUT IS OFTEN CRUCIAL TO THE PROPER MANAGEMENT
AND USE OF FUNDS IN THE FIELD.

C. USICA. ALTHOUGH THE USICA STAFF WAS WITHOUT AN INFORMATION
OFFICER FOR SEVERAL MONTHS, ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES WERE CARRIED OUT
WITH A MINIMUM OF DISLOCATION. A RETURN TO FULL STRENGHT WILL
FACILITATE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOME FUNIOIONS WHICH HAVE HAD TO BE
SKIMPED.

10. ON THE WHOLE THE FUNCTIONING OF THE EMBASSY AND ITS ASSOCIATED
AGENCIES GIVES US CONSIDERABLE SATISFACTION. WE RECOGNIZE
A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS MENTIONED ABOVE ON WHICH WE LOOD FORWARD TO
DISCUSSING POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: FI
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 sep 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978YAOUND04368
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780380-0663
Format: TEL
From: YAOUNDE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780979/aaaacnpv.tel
Line Count: 380
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7a78e852-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SIG
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1476394
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POST MEMORANDUM FOR AMERICAN EMBASSY YAOUNDE
TAGS: ASIG, CM
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7a78e852-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014